



File Code: 3400

Date: December 7, 2005

Mr. Mel Poole  
USDI National Park Service  
Catoctin Mountain Park  
5502 Foxville Road  
Thurmont, MD 21788

Dear Mr. Poole:

On November 8, 2005, USDA Forest Service personnel conducted a gypsy moth egg mass survey at Catoctin Mountain Park (CMP). The purposes of this survey were to determine gypsy moth population densities and to assess the potential for defoliation and the need for treatment in 2006.

The gypsy moth first reached CMP in the late 1970's and reached a significant population level in 1981. Starting in 1982 and ending in 1989, gypsy moth suppression projects were conducted annually at CMP (Table 1). From 1990-1999, gypsy moth populations were low as no suppression projects were conducted and no defoliation was detected. Twenty four acres of defoliation were detected at CMP in 2000, the first defoliation detected since 1988. Gypsy moth suppression projects were conducted in 2001, 2002 and 2003. These projects were much smaller than the ones conducted in the 1980's as they ranged in size from only 67 to 840 acres. Due to the suppression project conducted in the spring of 2003 and the natural decline of gypsy moth in the area, new gypsy moth egg masses were almost non-existent that fall and in 2004. Although no defoliation was detected at, or in the vicinity of, CMP in 2005, gypsy moth populations are building in the area.

The egg mass survey was concentrated on high-use areas such as campgrounds, picnic areas, trails, etc. The survey consisted of casually walking on trails or roads and tallying all new (2005) gypsy moth egg masses on overstory trees and understory vegetation. Egg mass lengths were also measured to determine the overall "health" of the existing population and as a measure of egg mass fecundity.

The location of the survey areas are shown in Figure 1. The summarized results of the survey are presented in Table 2. In brief, a total of 111 egg masses were detected during the survey, which covered over 6 miles at CMP. Overall egg mass tended to be large to extra large in size, ranging from 22 to 55 and averaging 38 mm. Egg masses larger than 25 mm typically indicate healthy populations.

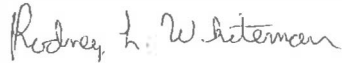
Although the gypsy moth population is building and healthy, their numbers are not sufficient to cause any noticeable defoliation at Catoctin Mountain Park in 2006. Therefore, treatment is not recommended.



Gypsy moth populations at CMP will be monitored in 2006 through the defoliation survey in June and an egg mass survey in the fall. As in previous years, USDI Park personnel should conduct the preliminary egg mass survey. If defoliating numbers of egg masses are detected, the Forest Service will also conduct an egg mass survey.

Please call me at 304-285-1555 if you have any questions regarding this egg mass survey or this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rodney L. Whiteman".

RODNEY L. WHITEMAN  
Forester  
Forest Health Protection

Cc: Robert Tichenor, MDA  
Betsie Handley, MDA  
James Voight, CMP  
Noel Schneeberger, AO  
Jil Swearingen, CUE

Table 1 – Gypsy moth suppression and defoliation history at  
Catoctin Mountain Park

YEAR	ACRES TREATED	INSECTICIDE	ACRES OF DEFOLIATION
1982	5769	Btk	42
1983	5769	Btk	0
1984	1200	Btk	0
1985	673	Btk	0
1986	173	Btk	0
1987	1300	Btk	48
1988	2260	Btk	19
1989	3045	Btk	0
1990	0	N/A	0
1991	0	N/A	0
1992	0	N/A	0
1993	0	N/A	0
1994	0	N/A	0
1995	0	N/A	0
1996	0	N/A	0
1997	0	N/A	0
1998	0	N/A	0
1999	0	N/A	0
2000	0	N/A	24
2001	840	Btk	11.5
2002	401	GYPCHEK	46
2003	67	GYPCHEK	0
2004	0	N/A	0
2005	0	N/A	0

Table 2 – Gypsy moth egg mass survey results at  
Catoctin Mountain Park, November 8, 2005

AREA	Estimated distance in miles	Number of egg masses	Average egg mass size (mm)
Trail – Park Central to Thurmont Vista	.5	6	39
Trail – Thurmont Vista to Wolf Rock	.8	20	34
Trail – Wolf Rock to Chimney Rock	.6	17	39
Trail – Chimney Rock to Crows Nest trail intersection	.5	21	37
Trail – Crows Nest trail intersection to Park HQ trail intersection	.6	5	37
Trail – Park HQ trail intersection to VC trail intersection	1.1	11	36
Trail – VC trail intersection to Thurmont Vista trail intersection	.6	8	40
Chestnut Picnic Area	.25	0	N/A
Misty Mount	.3	7	35
Green Top	.4	13	46
Owens Creek Picnic area and trail	.2	2	43
Owens Creek Campground	.3	1	40



Figure 1. -- Location of the gypsy moth survey areas at Catoctin Mountain Park, November 8, 2005.

